

The Occupational Health Service (OHS) is staffed by industrial hygienists, health educators, data analysts, and other public health professionals focused on reducing occupational injuries and illnesses experienced by workers in New Jersey. The OHS enforces health standards, collects and disseminates occupational health surveillance data; and educates employees, employers, and health professionals about the risks from exposure to hazardous substances and workplace accidents.

The goals of OHS are to:

- ✓ decrease the magnitude of occupational diseases and injuries in our state;
- ✓ provide educational materials and presentations, and technical consultations regarding occupational health to employers, employees, and health professionals;
- ✓ facilitate interaction among federal, state, county and local agencies, academic institutions, trade associations and labor unions to develop cooperative efforts which address occupational health problems in New Jersey;
- ✓ enforce the public employee and emergency responder provisions of the New Jersey Worker and Community Right to Know Act;
- ✓ enforce the health provisions of the New Jersey Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Act.

OHS is dedicated to providing a full range of services to employers, workers, and health professionals interested in occupational health and safety. OHS personnel actively evaluate new findings in the area of occupational health and share this information with government agencies and private organizations.

The activities of OHS are organized in the three Programs described below: Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health, Right to Know, and Occupational Health Surveillance.

Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Program

The Department of Health and Senior Services established the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) Program when the PEOSH Act was enacted in 1984. Under the PEOSH Act, federal standards are adopted and enforced by the Program. The PEOSH Program staff:

- ✓ target high hazard workplaces for industrial hygiene inspections;
- ✓ respond to emergency incidents, referrals from other agencies, and complaints received from public employees;
- ✓ provide employers with written reports of inspection findings and recommendations;
- ✓ conduct educational seminars for public employers and employees;
- ✓ publish educational materials which describe methods for reducing occupational health hazards;
- ✓ provide consultations to public employers and employees who are interested in resolving health concerns at their workplace.

Right to Know Program

The New Jersey Worker and Community Right to Know (RTK) Act mandates that public employees and emergency responders be provided with information about the hazardous substances with which they work or are potentially exposed to. Knowing the risks associated with these chemicals and the precautions needed to reduce exposure can prevent injury and illness. Information about

hazardous chemicals present at facilities in a municipality is also available to community residents. The Right to Know Program staff:

- ✓ collect Right to Know Surveys which contain hazardous substance inventories from 11,000 public facilities;
- ✓ develop and distribute Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets to public facilities, public employees, emergency responders, hospitals, health departments, private businesses, and community residents;
- ✓ inspect public workplaces for compliance with RTK training, labeling, survey completion, and establishment of a RTK central file;
- ✓ inspect private workplaces for compliance with RTK labeling;
- ✓ coordinate Right to Know outreach activities by the 21 counties;
- ✓ certify private consultants who provide Right to Know training for public employees;
- ✓ conduct a 36-hour Right to Know Train-the-Trainer course for public employees;
- ✓ prepare Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets and other materials in Spanish.

Occupational Health Surveillance Program

Activities in the Occupational Health Surveillance Program are designed to collect, analyze and interpret data on occupational injuries, illnesses, and hazards. State regulations require reporting of selected occupational diseases and injuries from hospitals, physicians, and clinical laboratories.

This information is used to plan, implement, and evaluate public health interventions. The goal of occupational health surveillance is to protect the overall health of workers by reducing disability, detecting disease early, and, most importantly, eliminating hazards at the workplace.

Surveillance activities are organized around specific hazards and their health consequences, including: lead toxicity, silicosis, asbestos-related diseases, occupational asthma, cadmium and mercury toxicity, fatal occupational injuries, and others. The Surveillance Program staff:

- ✓ evaluate health and safety hazards at selected workplaces in the private sector;
- ✓ provide educational interventions with employees and employers including medical education of health care providers;
- ✓ publish and disseminate occupational health surveillance data.

Surveillance activities are supported in part with funds from three federal agencies, namely, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the National Cancer Institute, and the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Contact Information

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Please visit us on the Web:

Occupational Health Service
www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/odisweb/

Occupational Health Surveillance Program
www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/survweb/

**Public Employees Occupational
Safety and Health Program**
www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/peoshweb/

Right to Know Program
www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/

Occupational Health Service



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